

REMARKS

I. Formal Matters

In the interest of compact prosecution, Applicant hereby amends independent claims 1 and 3 to incorporate features found in dependent claims 27 and 28, respectively, and accordingly cancels claims 27 and 28. Applicant also cancels previously-withdrawn claims 4, 5, 8, 9, and 12. As such, claims 1-3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 18-26, and 29 are all the claims pending in the present Application.

Because the amendments to independent claims 1 and 3 do not introduce features that were not previously considered by the Examiner, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner enter the amendments of claims 1 and 3. Additionally, because claims 27 and 28 were deemed to contain allowable subject matter, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 3 should be deemed allowable.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for rejoining claims 7 and 14, and for indicating that claims 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, and 20-28 contain allowable subject matter, and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant hereby rewrites claims 6, 7, 11, 22, 23, and 25 in independent form, and respectfully submits that these claims, and claims dependent from these claims, are also now allowable.

Applicant respectfully reminds the Examiner that he has not provided a signed Form 1449 (SB08) for the IDS submitted on March 14, 2008. **Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner kindly indicate that the IDS has been considered by providing a signed Form 1449 (SB08) with the next office action.**

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the receipt of priority documents submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d). Additionally, Applicant thanks the Examiner for accepting the drawings filed on August 14, 2007.

II. Statement of Substance of Interview

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative on December 30 and 31, 2008, and February 5, 2009.

During the interview in December, Applicant's representative requested clarification of which claims are deemed to contain allowable subject matter. Applicant's representative also proposed minor amendments to claims 1 and 3, as incorporated in the claim amendments shown above, to determine whether they would overcome the 35 U.S.C. § 112 rejection. Applicant's representative inquired as to whether amending independent claims 1 and 3 to incorporate features found in claims 27 and 28 (with a minor clarification regarding first and second blocks) would place claims 1 and 3 in condition for allowance. Applicant's representative sought confirmation that the proposed claim amendments would be entered by the Examiner without the filing of a Request for Continued Examination. And Applicant's representative inquired as to whether the Information Disclosure Statement submitted on March 14, 2008, has been considered.

The Examiner confirmed that claims 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, and 20-28 are deemed to contain allowable subject matter. The Examiner also confirmed that the proposed minor amendments to claims 1 and 3, as incorporated in the claim amendments shown above, would overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112. The Examiner indicated that amendment of independent claims 1 and 3 to incorporate features found in claims 27 and 28, respectively, would likely place those claims in condition for allowance, contingent on an updated search. The Examiner confirmed

that the proposed claim amendments would be entered. And the Examiner confirmed that the IDS of March 14, 2008, has been considered, and indicated that he would provide a signed Form 1449 as confirmation.

In a discussion with the Examiner on February 5, 2009, Applicant's representative inquired as to whether replacing the phrase "independent of" with "different from," as shown in the above claim amendment, would be acceptable in the proposed amendments to independent claims 1 and 3. The Examiner indicated that such a change would be acceptable, and would also likely place independent claims 1 and 3 (amended to incorporate features found in claims 27 and 28, respectively) in condition for allowance.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, and 20-28 contain allowable subject matter.

Applicant respectfully submits that all independent claims now contain allowable subject matter, and respectfully requests that claims 1-3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 18-26, and 29 be allowed.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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